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THIRD QUARTER - 1952

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Editorial

THE translation, production and distribution of the Scriptures have always been the central concern of the Bible Societies. Some Societies have so far limited their activities to within the borders of their own country; now they are being asked to widen their horizon and to take responsibility for other fields too. Others, the minority, have from the commencement been concerned with the needs of peoples and nations all over the world. All Bible Societies have considered it their task to make the Scriptures available in the form of books to all men at a price which they can afford to pay. Only recently have the Bible Societies also become concerned with the question of the *use* of the Bible.

It is a striking fact that this issue of the BULLETIN echoes authoritative statements from three great 'Protestant' countries—England, Germany and the United States—which have expressed a concern with regard to the regular use of the Bible by so-called 'Christian' people. This is not deliberate pessimism. But the Bible Societies, as well as the churches, have been led to recognise that, although almost every non Roman Catholic in the western world can still be regarded as possessing a Bible or at least a New Testament, only a small minority read it with some regularity.

This disregard of Holy Scripture is not new. One can read in reports published already in the early twenties that the Bible was neglected then and that its influence never appeared to be so limited. "The Bible," said a report of the Dutch Student Christian Movement in 1922, "is much less highly regarded now than in the past and it has become a closed book for multitudes of men." This trend, discernible already 25 years ago, has not been stopped and it is high time that the churches paid more than verbal attention to this evolution.

It is true to say that parallel with this contempt and forgetfulness one can note a renewal of interest in the Bible in many circles. In the Church struggle against Nazism in Germany, Norway, Holland and elsewhere, the immediate relevance of the Bible was gratefully rediscovered and acknowledged. The study of the Bible is playing an increasing part in the ecumenical movement and in the preparation and running of the great ecumenical conferences. Theology is again becoming Bible-centred. But as far as one can see, this "rediscovery" of the Bible has not yet reached very wide circles and there is still a long way to go before the movement away from the Bible can be matched and reversed.

Some Bible Societies, like the American and Netherlands Bible Societies, have already considered this new problem and are issuing lists of passages for daily Bible readings. In the United States of America great publicity is given each year to the world-wide Bible reading campaign from Thanksgiving Day until Christmas, and millions of lists and tracts are disseminated all over the country and abroad. But the most significant development in this field is the emphasis which is being laid upon this question of the use of the Bible in the British and Foreign Bible Society's preparations for the celebration of the Third Jubilee of Bible Society work. This 150th anniversary is to be used not only to remember a glorious and blessed past, and to draw attention to the increasing commitments of the Bible Society, but also and primarily to underline the fundamental importance of Bible reading in the life of the individual Christian, of the Church and of a nation and to direct to the Bible and its teaching and message the masses whose godless and Christless search for "a new life" and "a new hope" is heading for disaster.

There is no doubt that the Bible Societies cannot be content with just providing the Scriptures needed by the churches, both to cover the requirements of their own members and those of evangelistic and mission work. To disseminate Bibles which are not used and read is a waste of funds and in this new situation, new in comparison with the conditions under which the Bible Societies started work one hundred and fifty years ago, it is obvious that the Bible Societies not only cannot ignore the problem of the use of the Bible, but they must play their part in the efforts deployed to solve it.

At the last meeting of the UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES, the Bible Societies gave voice to their concern and desire to see the Bible given a more central place in the life of the individual and of the churches. The findings of this

Conference, published in this issue implement to some extent the general terms of the *Message*. The Bible Societies will have to go yet one step further, they will have together to give thought to this new aspect of their mission and will have to consider what steps, if any, they themselves—co-operatively or individually—can take in order to give more adequate support to or assume a greater share in the efforts now taking place all over the world, as for instance those organised by the Y.M.C.A. which are also reported in this issue, to make so many nominal Christians again acquainted with the sacred writings so that they really may be "complete, equipped for every good work."

THE STUDY GROUPS AT THE U.B.S. CONFERENCE IN OOTACAMUND

IN the last issue of the BULLETIN, one of our new Vice-Chairmen, the Rev. H. M. Arrowsmith, gave a short account of the meetings which took place in India in February. We also reproduced in that issue the *Message to the Churches* adopted by the Council and Conference. We now publish below the findings of the Study Groups, the sessions of which formed the most important part of the Conference.

Two main groups under the leadership of the Rt. Rev. C. K. Jacob, Vice-President of the U.B.S. and the Most Rev. A. N. Mukherji, Metropolitan of the Church of India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon, dealt with *The Place and Use of the Bible in the Church and in Evangelism* which is an essential aspect of Bible Society concerns ; the one concentrated especially on evangelism, the other on the Church, both following the memoranda and agenda prepared by Dr. Chirgwin, the U.B.S. Research Secretary. However, it was not possible to draw a distinct line of demarkation between the fields to be covered by each group and it was found that there had been sufficient overlapping between the two groups to make it desirable and advantageous to combine the findings of each section into a general and overall statement.

A small group, led by Dr. Hilda M. Lazarus, Director of the Christian Medical College, Vellore, was given the responsibility of reviewing *The Place of Women in Bible Society Work.*

Finally, another small group of Bible Society Secretaries met to consider the general situation of Bible work in Asia to-day and to see whether there were any recommendations to be made with regard to the policy to be followed by the Societies active in that part of the world.

Data had been collected from almost all the countries of Asia by the General Secretariate and surveys were submitted to the members of the group before the Conference.

No recommendations or resolutions were issued by the group, but the following points indicate the main conclusions at which the group arrived during its review of the situation.

(i) In most cases, the lag in production or distribution due to the war has been overcome.

(ii) All reports received from Asiatic countries (not including 'closed lands' and China) indicate an important increase in the demand for complete Bibles and a certain increase in the demand for Testaments and Portions.

(iii) If conditions remain as they are, no drastic change is likely to affect the policy of the Bible Societies for most of the Asian countries. It was however noted that (*a*) developments in Korea may present a unique opportunity which should be used to the full ; (*b*) circulation in Japan in the future will involve a larger proportion of complete New Testaments (1 million, as against 700,000) ; (*c*) although production and distribution machinery is not yet adequate to allow an immediate increase in distribution, the aim which the Bible Society of India, Pakistan and Ceylon is setting before itself is to double circulation within five years ; (*d*) plans have been made to increase circulation in Indonesia by one third in 1953 ; (*e*) Chinese Scriptures in large quantities may be required for missionary work among the 8-10 million Chinese scattered throughout Asia outside of China.

(iv) This steady increase, as well as the necessity for meeting not only the demands of the Christian community, but also the latent need of many who have not yet been reached by the Gospel, places an increasingly heavy financial burden upon the Bible Societies responsible for the work in these areas. The local churches will, it is hoped, enlarge their support ; and yet none of the local Bible Societies in Asia can be expected to become self-supporting within a short period. On the other hand, several European Bible Societies on the Continent have recently accepted or are considering accepting limited responsibilities for Bible work in missionary areas. This represents appreciable help and it is to be hoped that they will intensify their efforts and be able to take an increasing share in the world-wide task.

(v) Asia represents one of the strategic areas in the world for widespread distribution of the Scriptures and for the building up of indigenous self-supporting Bible Societies. The rise of nationalism, the revival of the ancient religions and the spread of communism may soon render any foreign help impossible. The policy of the foreign Bible Societies which help in that area should continue to aim at developing to the utmost the strength and vitality of the local groups.

(vi) The urgency of the challenge in the East, however, must by no means detract the Bible Societies from their immediate and pressing responsibilities in other strategic regions such as Latin America and Central and South Africa, although it obviously calls for additional effort and for an intensified appeal to the supporters of the work of the Bible Societies.

O. B.

THE PLACE OF THE BIBLE IN THE CHURCH AND IN EVANGELISM

A. *The Bible as an evangelising agency. Its message for to-day.*

(1) There is incontrovertible evidence that the Holy Spirit uses the Bible not only in winning individual souls for Christ at all times and in all parts of the world, but also without human agency for the planting of churches. Widespread reading of the Bible also undoubtedly has effect on public and social affairs. While not reaching the full redemptive level, this influence has been and is of great power in raising the whole moral level of society, leading to social reform and providing a standard of social righteousness.

(2) The Bible confronts man with a revelation of God as Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier and with man as creature, sinner and beloved child of God.

Modern man has lost a sense of direction, of the meaning of life, and of the significance of the world in which he lives. In this situation what appeals to him is the story of the whole Bible, showing the sovereignty of God in and over all history. Our presentation of Jesus Christ and Him Crucified and Risen as God's unique way of salvation and judgment, must be set in the framework of the revelation of God, the Creator and Father, seeking to save His children, to give them direction, and power to live a victorious life.

That Christ is the Lord of all life, the answer to all history, and the Hope of the world, is the message of the Bible for to-day.

(3) Our present-day stress on personal evangelism and corporate Church efforts should not exclude the work which the Bible itself can do in speaking direct to the souls of men, even in " closed lands." The Holy Spirit uses all these means and not necessarily one more than another. Indeed, the ideal we should hold before ourselves is that of the Spirit working at one and the same time through the House of God, the man of God and the Word of God.

B. *The distribution of the Bible as a common responsibility of the Bible Societies and the Churches. How to secure this.*

(1) The distribution of the Scriptures by the Bible Societies and the churches has so far fallen short of the urgent needs of to-day.

The time has come for the churches to take a more active part in the work of distribution as a form of their evangelistic witness, and to this end consultation between the Bible Societies and the churches should be undertaken with a view to finding the best methods of distribution and of securing the full co-operation of individual congregations. The growing maturity of the younger churches and the increasing sense of evangelism which now characterises the churches as a whole, provide a suitable opportunity for them to share with the Bible Societies in the work of Bible distribution. Each congregation or group of congregations should have some distributing agency of its own in connection with evangelistic work.

(2) Colportage is thankfully recognised as a real ministry of Christ in His Church. It has been manifestly blessed by God and from the first has been a fruitful means of evangelism and church planting. This ministry is in many places already being exercised by the local church. This practice should now be more widely adopted, because it is supremely desirable that the distribution of the Scriptures should ultimately become the responsibility of the whole Christian community.

It is therefore strongly recommended that the churches should set aside men and women for the full-time work of the distribution of the Scriptures and should give them definite recognition and status. While pastors should normally lead their congregations in evangelistic work, full-time evangelistic workers could organise the work of volunteers. Wherever possible, those who share in the distribution of the Scriptures should work in teams, in order that fellowship in service may be secured.

In fields with large non-Christian populations the Bible Societies should continue for the present to function as they do now and should consider it their special responsibility to serve areas where the Church is not yet effectively established.

Training institutes for those engaged in Bible distribution should be arranged according to language areas on a joint basis, the Bible Societies,

Church Councils and N.C.C. s co-operating wherever possible, and secretaries and experienced colporteurs helping in such training. The courses at such institutes should be for at least two weeks and should be supplemented at suitable intervals by refresher courses.

Efforts should also be made in all the churches to secure men and women of keen Christian experience and evangelistic fervour to act as voluntary distributors of the Scriptures on a basis of part-time or occasional service. The importance of enlisting members of youth organisations to share in this work should not be forgotten.

It is also recommended that theological institutions and Bible schools be asked to make a survey of the unevangelised areas in their neighbourhood, with a view to evoking the interest of their students in the work of Scripture distribution.

(3) The establishment of Bible Society branches with depots in areas where there is difficulty in obtaining Scriptures from distant auxiliaries should be considered, and ' Correspondents ' should be appointed in various areas to hold small stocks of Scriptures on a consignment basis, thus making them more readily available to village pastors and workers and to Christian institutions where they might be publicly displayed.

Further methods of distribution which have been found of value, are for instance : radio programmes where permitted, bookstalls at fairs, mobile caravans, exhibitions.

(4) It is agreed that the Societies' practice of selling Scriptures considerably below cost price is right, provided that there is always freedom to give gratis where necessary. Nevertheless, in situations where indiscriminate mass free distribution is contemplated, it is recommended that ways of consultation and possibly of co-operation with other agencies that show concern for such distribution of the Scriptures should be sought at the highest level.

C. *The use of the Bible as an evangelistic agency is proportionate to people's reverence for, interest in and knowledge of it. How to develop this.*

(1) Bible study, private and corporate, is of the highest value for evangelism. This applies not only to enquirers and new converts, but also to all engaged in evangelistic work as well as to officers, workers and members of the Bible Societies (it would deepen their motive and enlarge their vision) and to all church members in general.

Use should be made, where suitable, of various methods in corporate Bible study, such as study circles, seminars, etc., and the churches should be requested to encourage the use of the Bible at daily family worship, and of systematic Bible reading courses, especially those that encourage the consecutive reading of whole books of the Bible.

In order also that young people may be brought up to love the Bible and be instructed systematically in the Christian Faith and Life, every effort should be made to conduct Bible classes and the greatest emphasis should be laid upon them.

(2) One of the best means of bringing home to church members the central importance of the Word of God in the life of every Christian, is the annual observance of a Bible Sunday. In view of the fact that the second Sunday

in Advent, traditionally celebrated as Bible Sunday in many parts of the world, may for good reasons not be the most suitable for the purpose, consideration should be given by the regional societies and churches to the selection of other alternative dates.

The observance of a week of witness also, for instance, in which preaching and distribution of the Scriptures is undertaken especially by lay members of the churches, is recommended to the consideration of all. A scheme of public reading of the Bible might be arranged as part of such a week of witness.

By means of campaigns, appeals and exhortations, the churches and the Bible Societies should, by co-operative action, make sure that one Bible at least is to be found and is being read in every Christian home.

In view of the high percentage of illiterate Christians in some churches, the practice of memorising texts and passages of Scripture (with chapter and verse) should be encouraged.

(3) In order that the Scriptures may be read audibly, devoutly and intelligibly at public worship, it is suggested that those who read lessons from the Bible should be thoroughly prepared and instructed in the art of intelligent reading and clear articulation. At the reading of the Bible in church the context of the passage might be supplied where necessary for clearer understanding.

It is also urged that expository preaching—i.e. the explanation, interpretation and application of Scripture texts and passages—should become a regular practice with those who conduct public worship.

(4) Finally, the following aids for stimulating interest in the cause of the Bible have been found of value and should be further developed : sound (and silent) films, lantern slides, pictures, etc., gramophone records ; shop window displays ; radio programmes where possible ; biblical dramas ; bookstalls at fairs ; exhibitions ; public reading, recitation or singing of biblical passages in the vernacular ; Gospel portions as Christmas or New Year greeting cards with appropriate covers.

D. *The language and format of the Bible. How to present it.*

(1) In translating the Bible, the first consideration is that it should be in the language understood by the people. This should take precedence over the desire to have the Scriptures rendered in highly literary language, and over a too affectionate regard for earlier versions.

In order to ensure the adequate translation of the Scriptures, it is essential that nationals of the country should be available who are thoroughly conversant with the original biblical languages. It is therefore strongly urged that the theological colleges of Asia and elsewhere be encouraged to continue the study of Hebrew and Greek.

(2) The practice of publishing complete Scripture portions should continue as heretofore, but it is recommended that there should be inserted in all Bibles, Testaments and Portions a slip giving local directions as to where the reader may secure further material.

The name ' Bible ' should not be attached to any shortened, abridged or abbreviated volume, but where necessary selections such as the Sermon on the Mount, the Parables of Jesus, etc., may be published with the approval of the regional authorities.

It is recommended that certain explanatory notes should be enclosed with Bibles, Testaments and Portions and that the U.B.S. should prepare a list, with explanatory notes of proper names and other terms that must be transliterated (e.g. Pharisees, Sanhedrin, etc.).

Special editions of the Gospels, printed in large type and rendered in limited vocabulary, should be readily available for new literates. Where necessary, each Gospel could be issued in two or three parts.

Picture covers are undoubtedly of great value and it is recommended that the U.B.S. should consider the whole question of using illustrated material and should discover what blocks and other materials are available with other agencies. Any method of illustrating, whether picture, line-drawing, or diagram, etc., should avoid any attempt at portrayal of our Lord.

THE PLACE OF WOMEN IN BIBLE SOCIETY WORK

The Group heard reports on Women's Work from the Bible Societies in different parts of the world, and came to the conclusion that while women are active in a greater or lesser degree in different countries, " it would be worthwhile for the Societies to consider whether they are really using the capabilities of women in their service to the best and fullest advantage and whether they are giving women sufficient recognition and as full a share in their councils and policy-making bodies as they might." (Miss M. Harrison, B.F.B.S. : " Women and the Bible Societies ").

In view of this, the Group makes the following suggestions :—

1. That Bible Society work would benefit by *having more women on all its committees.*

   In the organisation of local and national Societies and of the UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES the contributions which women can make should be increased, so that men's and women's varied experience and gifts can complement each other. Perhaps a woman of international standing might be appointed to one of the Vice-Presidential vacancies of the U.B.S.

2. That while being convinced that the giving of the Bible to the world is a privilege laid by God equally upon men and women, the group feels that there are areas where *women could be specially organised* for this purpose through the Women's groups existing in the churches with the objects of :—

   (*a*) Bringing the Bible into the central place in the home

   (*b*) Creating and sustaining interest in the distribution of the Scriptures

   (*c*) Raising funds

   These Branches, through the groups from which they come, could engage in varying activities to fulfil these objects :—

   (*a*) Groups for prayer and Bible study

   (*b*) Annual meetings of the Women's Groups
   Children's rallies and competitions
   Church Bible stalls
   Exhibitions and pageants
   Voluntary distribution of the Scriptures

(*c*) Sales of work
Collecting boxes and cards
Religious plays
Stamp collecting

3. That where Women's Groups are not specially organised or required, Bible Society Secretaries and Agents be encouraged to develop a *definite* approach to women, encouraging them to study and distribute the Bible.

4. That since in arousing the interest of women, it is inevitable that their interest is passed on to their children, the Group feels that Bible Societies must consider *a special approach to children and adolescents—the Church of the future*, through existing organisations, Youth Leagues, S.C.M., Y.M. and Y.W.C.A.'s, Sunday Schools, etc. For such work there would be needed :—

   Panels of suitable speakers
   Children's rallies
   Memorising competitions and essays
   Approach to child evangelism movements

   In this connection the B.F.B.S. Good News Transport Fleet, an organisation for children, might be studied.

5. That there is a great need for *more literature* to create and sustain the interest among women and children. The Group suggested the following :—

   Children's Bibles and illustrated portions
   Bible Society page in Christian magazines
   Bible study leaflets
   Pamphlets on Women and the Bible (see B.F.B.S.)
   Speakers' hand-books (see B.F.B.S.)
   Story leaflets.

N.B.— In many cases literature produced for children would also be suitable for village women and new literates.

The Group recognises that Women's organisations represent throughout the world " the greatest organised reservoir of lay power in the Churches." This reservoir has not yet been fully drawn upon by the Bible Societies, nor have we given the women in the Churches the information about the Bible in the world to-day which would inspire them to action.

Where this has been done through Women's Organisations, latent talent has been produced, and the work of the Bible Society has received a new impetus. Many women have developed a wider outlook and a sense of vocation and fellowship across the barriers of denominations has increased.

Women respond readily to active participation in the fellowship of the churches in the world.

The remarkable growth, for instance, in the last few years, of the Women's World Day of Prayer, serves to support this impression, and there are few causes that can lead one more widely into a world fellowship than that of the Bible Societies.

In appealing for women to have a greater share in giving the Bible to the world, the Group recalled that it was a woman, Phebe of Cenchrea, who was the first colporteur, carrying St. Paul's letter to Rome, and that the English Revised Version of the Bible gives a challenging translation of Psalm 68, verse 11 : " The Lord giveth the word : the women that publish the tidings are a great host."

NEWS FROM ALL THE WORLD

Under this heading we do not intend to give only information of the Bible Societies, but we also want to include such facts as may or should have a bearing on Bible Society work. This information should therefore not only tell us what other societies are doing, but should also help us to apprehend the whole realm of our common responsibilities and should lead us to think out how best we may extend our own activity in the future, in such a way as to fulfil our calling to the utmost.

Aden

THE British and Foreign Bible Society has been formally authorised by the Governor of the Protectorate to sell Scriptures in the interior of the territory, as well as in Aden itself. The Rev. L. V. D. Ashley, agent of the B.F.B.S. in Addis Ababa, who recently visited Aden, gave as the reasons for this: firstly, the Government's appreciation of the service rendered by the Scottish Mission through medical work and secondly, the realisation of the fact that the Arabs in the interior of the territory, far from opposing the distribution of Christian Scriptures, welcome them. Up to now, the taking of Scriptures into the interior by missionaries or their agents has been virtually forbidden. Early in the year, a colporteur arrived in Aden for six months. During the first two months of his activity he sold Scriptures to a value equal to about two and a half years' normal sales through the mission bookshop in Aden.

" There is, of course, a satisfaction," concludes Mr. Ashley " in seeing the opening of doors which have been so long closed against the dissemination of the Word of God. But these areas, which are part of the general problem set for Christian missionary work by Islam, have, besides, special difficulties of their own—peoples hostile, illiterate, ignorant, fanatic. The need is great—but the response to any Christian approach may be expected to be meagre."

Austria

The agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society in Vienna reports that during the first six months of this year, the circulation of Scriptures in Austria exceeded the figures for the same period last year by 50%.

*

Two films issued by the American Bible Society have been used for 83 promotion meetings held in February and March in the villages of two regions in Austria. 5,600 people were present at these gatherings. Mr. Karl Uhl, secretary of the *Austrian Bible Committee* and agent of the B.F.B.S. writes in this connection :

" But of what importance is all that (number of listeners and money collected) in comparison with the impression and the encouragement given by the showing of the films ? I must first stress that I myself had to overcome a certain doubt as to whether the showing of a film about Bible distribution and the effect of the Bible on people and, moreover in an American presentation, would have any success in Austria. You should yourself have seen how well the films were received. The first film, ' The Book for the World of To-morrow,' was very good, presenting the meaning and the importance of Bible distribution in the past and into the future, but the second film ' Thy Word giveth Light,' was the sermon which complemented the first film so well . . . . .

"This work is so very important in our country, for it represents the effect of the plough. The first joy which we visibly experience in such tours is not so much the collection received, for this is largely used up in travelling expenses, but rather the strongly marked increase in Bible distribution and in this way the showing of the films in the past half year has contributed considerably to the very noticeable success in distribution.

"A second significant revival in our work during the past few months which has been helped in connection with the showing of the films, is an extended enrolment of friends. I do not wish to deal here with final figures for I know, alas, that much of the enthusiasm will die down again, but nevertheless the colporteurs and we here in the Bible depot have gained a considerably large number of friends who support the work of the Bible Societies through their financial contributions. We keep these friends informed, although not every month yet, by sending them a small, duplicated news sheet."

Belgium

The *Belgian Bible Society* now has an illustrated magazine edition of the Acts of the Apostles in French in the press. The American Bible Society has loaned the pictures used for its own issue of the same book.

Brazil

1,510,712 volumes of Scripture were circulated in Brazil last year, 50% more than in 1950. 168,670 complete Bibles were distributed, a figure almost doubling that of the best previous year. One of the reasons for this development is the progress of the evangelical movement which is a Bible-centred movement.

Canada

The appointment is announced of the Rev. A. H. O'Neil, M.A., D.D., as General Secretary of the *British and Foreign Bible Society in Canada,* to succeed the Rev. W. H. Hudspeth who was asked to fill this post five years ago, and who, having reached the age of retirement, will return to England in December. Mr. Hudspeth relinguishes his office at a time when plans for the celebration of the Third Jubilee of the British and Foreign Bible Society are well under way and the work in general in a prosperous condition. His previous work and experience in China and the Far East have enabled him to make a contribution of undoubted value to the work in Canada.

Dr. O'Neil has been for the past eleven years Principal of Huron College in London, Ontario. His appointment is effective from 1*st August,* 1952. He will spend the autumn at the London Bible House and will also visit the Near East to learn at first hand what the Society is accomplishing there and elsewhere, and their plans for the future.

Chile

The Secretary of the United Bible Societies in Chile (a joint agency of the American and British Bible Societies) reports the sale of 31,808 copies of Scripture during April (4,029 Bibles, 5,347 New Testaments, 22,432 Portions) about one fifth of the average annual sales.

Two factors explain these record sales. On the one hand, all pastors and workers in the churches had been approached in view of a special effort

in Bible distribution. Over 100 (about a quarter) answered the call. On the other hand, the Pentecostal Mission held a series of special evangelistic gatherings in March in various cities in the country. In Santiago the attendance was such that the last meetings were held in the national stadium which accommodates about 40,000 people. Evangelicals in Santiago number only about 15,000. The agent of the Bible Societies, the Rev. D. C. Brackenridge, writes in this connection :

" Nothing like it was ever seen in Chile. The whole city was stirred from Government officials down. It was the biggest religious movement ever seen in Santiago. For Chile it was a 20th century Pentecost.

" The Bible Society had a great time. We made arrangements that Scriptures would be on sale at the meetings and those responsible for the arrangements greatly helped us. It was a unique opportunity of reaching thousands with the Word of God. At the meetings in Santiago, lasting two weeks, we sold 2,314 Bibles, 3,200 Testaments and 5,500 Scripture Portions. But that did not end our sales. At the meetings over the ' loud speakers,' an announcement was made every night, telling the people where the Bible Society depot is and that they could buy Bibles there. The result has been a large increase of sales at the depot, and very interesting conversations have been held with people who were buying Bibles for the first time.

" When the meetings were over at the Stadium, the authorities would not take anything for rent and light, and the company who provided the ' loud speakers ' likewise did not charge. They confessed that it was the most wonderful thing they had ever seen in the Stadium, and had been surprised at the good conduct and behaviour of the people. They had provided plenty of police, but they were not required.

" It was interesting when the one in charge of sales at the meetings came in with a hamper containing five-peso and ten-peso bills to the amount of $76,000 pesos. We spent a day re-counting all this money. Our help towards this campaign was a liberal discount on the sales.

" The Word of God is not bound, and we rejoice that we have had this special opportunity of giving Santiago the Scriptures."

With regard to the special Bible distribution campaign among pastors and church workers, Mr. Brackenridge also writes :

" In March, after the Summer holidays, we sent out a circular letter to all pastors and workers, making a special offer as they began their Winter's work, to supply them with an assortment of Scriptures, including five small Bibles, four medium-sized Bibles, twenty small brown leatherette Testaments, one hundred Gospels and ten large illustrated Gospels of Luke. We explained that we wanted to help them and we wanted to prove to them that they could sell these Scriptures with little effort. To encourage them a discount of 50% was granted but the conditions were : (1) The order had to be sent in before the end of April ; (2) The order had to be accompanied by cheque or postal order as this was a ' Cash ' transaction ; (3) The order could not be repeated on the same terms, but a second order would be sent with the usual missionary discount of 30% . . . . . ."

Costa Rica

A Bible campaign was launched by the churches of Costa Rica at the end of March, under the title ' Every Citizen Campaign.' Its aim is so to carry

on the work of Scripture distribution that the local congregations may follow-up the interest wherever it is stimulated. Costa Rican ministers are confident that the country is ready for evangelism, and that it must be carried out through the distribution of Scriptures as well as through the preaching of the Gospel.

Egypt

The Bible Lands Agency South of the Bible Society has occasion to be grateful to God for the preservation of its premises in Cairo during the rioting and burning that took place within the city on 26th January. It is now known that the rioters reached the Bible Society's depot and offices with the intent to destroy the building, but a Muslim neighbour, despite the hostile attitude of the mob, urged the crowd to leave the place alone. He insisted that the occupants were sellers of the Holy Book and should not be touched. Since a Muslim will respect not only his Koran, but other Holy Books, the plea of the neighbour resulted in the rioters being persuaded to move on and the building remained unharmed. It is estimated that there were some 150,000 copies of Scripture in various languages upon the premises at that time.

England

The Popular Report of the *British and Foreign Bible Society* has just been published under the title : ' Envoys of Peace.' Its editor, the Rev. J. E. Fenn, writes :

" In this welter of conflicting forces the task of the Bible Society is simple yet of urgent importance. It provides a practical task in which the churches of different communions and men of varying stand-points can and do co-operate, and that is of no small value ; but the object of its work is the widest possible dissemination of the one Book which states the terms on which human life can achieve peace : it is, indeed, God's offer of peace to man."

During 1951 the Society published Gospels in ten languages in which no Scriptures had ever appeared before. Seven New Testaments were completed and three complete Bibles issued in tongues in which they have not been published previously. Translation and revision work is going on in over 180 different languages and during 1951 versions were issued in over 300. The Society is now responsible for publishihg Scriptures in *808 languages.* From London alone 3,629,752 books, while from other centres abroad another three million and a half, were issued, making a total of well over seven million volumes (Bibles, New Testaments and Portions of the Scriptures).

Like all publishing enterprises, the Society is greatly embarrassed by the rise in costs of production. Its aim is to make the Scriptures available in the languages men speak and at a price they can afford to pay—which involves heavy subsidy of most overseas editions.

" What men need," says Mr. Fenn, writing about Europe, " is recovery of faith and that not in themselves nor in their social and industrial techniques, but in God. That is why the Bible is coming into its own again as a source of contemporary faith and a guide in the practical and bewildering problems of daily living."

*

The first New Testament in Sobo (Urhobo), spoken in the Delta of the Niger river, has been issued by the B.F.B.S. The tribe numbers about 45,000 people, of whom only 3,000 are literate at the moment

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The B.F.B.S. has issued its first two Gospels for new literates. The one is the Gospel of Luke in English for the West Indies, the other is the Gospel of Mark in Mende (West Africa). 12-point characters have been used and many drawings illustrate the text. The format is that of a medium-size Bible.

The usual division into chapters has been maintained in the Mende edition, but the only indication of the verses is printed at the top of the page. Sub-titles have been given to the various sections of the book. The pictures were drawn by a native artist.

In the English version, the traditional chapter and verse reference figures only at the top of each page. The Gospel has been divided into sections and sub-sections according to the historical events, each with a heading. 10,000 copies of each of these Gospels were printed.

*

The B.F.B.S. in its home programme in connection with the Third Jubilee campaign is putting great stress on conferences. Seven week-end conferences have been arranged for the training of 300 key-workers. Led by members of the Bible House and district staffs, and devoting a great deal of time to group discussions and planning, these have proved to be very happy and successful ventures.

In addition, there have been 44 Day-conferences for women workers, with a total of 1,320 delegates, and further 48 Day-conferences will take place before the end of the year. For young people there have been week-end conferences, and August will be given over to Youth House Parties, and to a schoolgirls' camp which is full to capacity. Clearly the B.F.B.S. regards the education of the home constituency as an important part of its work and believes in conferences as one way of achieving this aim.

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The Archbishop of York chaired the Annual Meeting of the B.F.B.S. on 7th May, and the following paragraphs are quoted from his opening remarks:

" We ought to feel profoundly thankful for the work which, during the past year, has been done by this great Society. The report is indeed a cordial for drooping spirits ; it is a tonic to those who are depressed over the outlook for religion. The statement that in 1951 three and a half million volumes were produced from London alone (total from all countries by the Society is 7,095,391), twice the volume of work recorded in 1938, and in three hundred different languages is very remarkable, especially when it is remembered that printing has been hindered by the shortage of paper and increased costs . . . . . .

" While there is much to report which gives us cause for thankfulness, it would be sheer wishful thinking to imagine that the Bible in our own country is as widely read as in the past. There are many of our fellow-countrymen who have not read it at any time in their lives and have no intention of doing so. While at one time the Bible was the book certain to be found in every house, and it was widely read for guidance and help, to-day there are many homes without a Bible, and in some of those where it is found it is not used except when it is opened for some help in a crossword puzzle. Simple quotations from it are not recognised as such by many of those to whom they are addressed, and often are attributed to Shakespeare and other writers. Regular readers of the Bible find it difficult to understand that to millions of their fellow-countrymen it is an unknown book. That this is so is a grave loss both to the nation and the individual . . . . . .

" There are two reasons which chiefly account for the neglect of the Bible in our own country. At one time it was the only book, or one of two or three books, found in every house. To-day books of every sort and kind pour forth from the printing presses. The Bible is crowded out by other books. But the second reason is more fundamental. Teaching about the Bible, and the nature of its special books has often been inadequate ; the books have been left to speak for themselves without any explanation of the times and circumstances in which they were written ..... Misunderstanding about inspiration and about the nature of the Bible led many to look upon it as an ancient book which had no relevance to an age so different in many respects from that in which its books were written. If they had been taught to read the Bible intelligently as well as devotionally, they would have found from their own experience that it is indeed the Word of God speaking to them as it has spoken for centuries to untold multitudes ..... "

*

With the passing of Miss Mildred Cable the B.F.B.S. has suffered a grievous loss. Miss Cable did evangelistic work in China and Sinkiang for many years and crossed the Gobi desert as many as five times. For the last twelve years she served the B.F.B.S., and during this time, as the Rev. W. J. Platt stated at the Annual Meeting of the Society, " she became the pilot-light of thousands of our women workers ..... We shall not see her like for many a long year."

Eritrea

Tigrinya and not Amharic, as expected in some quarters, is to become the official language of Eritrea when Ethiopia assumes responsibility for this area next September. The British and Foreign Bible Society is now preparing the first edition of the complete Bible in Tigrinya. The New Testament was published in 1909. Mrs. Elsie Winqvist of the Swedish Evangelical Mission, together with her assistants, last year completed the final revision of the translation of the Old Testament after twenty years' work. The Bible is now being set up in Asmara in large type and printed copies of each page are taken on art paper and sent to London (where the appropriate type does not exist) for reproduction by the photographic offset method in a reduced convenient size.

While literacy is not widespread among the older people of Eritrea, it is reported that at least 50% of the younger generation can read and speak Tigrinya.

Finland

The President of the U.B.S., Bishop Berggrav, has recently paid a visit to Finland where he had been invited by Archbishop Salomies to unveil a monument erected near the Cathedral in Turku, in memory of Michael Agricola the first translator of the Bible in Finnish. The celebration took place on Ascension Day in the presence of representatives of the State authorities. Bishop Berggrav also visited the *Finnish Bible Society* in Turku and Helsinki and the Finnish Home Mission in Pieksämäki, where the latter organisation has its printing plants and produces its own editions of the Bible.

Germany

Writing about the responsibility of laymen in the Lutheran churches in Eastern Germany, Dr. W. Zimmermann, chairman of the *Altenburg Bible Society*, underlines the task of circulating the Scriptures :

" In the measure in which it has again become possible to produce Christian literature and especially Bibles and Bible portions ourselves, the helpers must also be colporteurs. This is not a question of distributing literature in a financial and commercial sense, but it is a matter of bringing the printed Word together with the spoken Word there where it is needed. Our Bible Societies are again beginning to look towards this work. It would be a great thing if this work could be combined with the activity of the helpers. It would be a great thing if, as in the times of the Church struggle, a Bible text could be brought to hundreds of thousands of houses each month, and be hung up in the home."

*

At the end of January, 1952 the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany resolved to set up a new commission with six members (five theologians and one poet), whose task would be to test the results of the previous Bible revision committee which worked so energetically until during the second world war, and has prepared the results of its work. It is hoped that out of the various opposed desires concerning the form of the Luther text, it will be possible to find a middle way which will then be recognised by the Church authorities.

*

" *Die Bibel in der Welt,*" the new bulletin of the *Union of Evangelical Bible Societies in Germany*, summarises in the following manner in its second issue, an article written recently by Professor D. Martin Fischer, director of the theological college in West Berlin (Kirchliche Hochschule) which trains a large number of pastors for Eastern Germany :

" Do we really read the Bible in our Christian student communities ? I mean, not only the texts for the day and not only commentaries and meditations, but the Bible itself ? And do we also go in for Bible study with helps such as a concordance and turning up the references, by making comparisons and research?" Dr. Fischer then referred to the time of the Church struggle : " The pressure which was upon the Church strengthened love for the Bible. It was a time of revival in this respect, revival of a particular kind." But then he goes on to say that it sometimes looks now as if the present generation will have nothing to do with teaching and learning about the Scriptures. " And yet it would be wrong to generalise. This is not true of the kernel of the Christian student communities. And it is particulary untrue of the students East of the iron curtain."

A similar warning is given by D. Johannes Steinweg, chairman of the *Niederhessen Bible Society* (Kassel) : " But what attitude do adults to-day largely take with regard to the Bible ? There are Bible studies for them. But what are our Bible studies ? In my experience, they are meetings of comparatively few members of a congregation, mostly elderly ladies. It sometimes happens that a pastor manages to gather together a larger group around the Bible. During a local mission or a Bible week, the number of people attending is perhaps a little larger than usual. But I cannot get away from the impression that Bible studies are largely dwindling . . . . . .

" Someone may ask : Is that not taking too much for granted from the members of our churches ? The missioners of our church in Kurhessen with whom I discussed this question, said to me : ' We have largely to deal with such simple people that we cannot expect much co-operation from them.' But the object of Bible study and of Bible weeks should be to get at least some of the members of the churches reading the Bible at home . . . . . .

" In order to make the Bible again a book of the home needs much spiritual effort and wisdom in teaching. Wisdom in teaching is perhaps not the strongest point of the Evangelical Church and her theologians, since these have been schooled too much along one line of thought and theory.

" We talk and write a great deal about the reconstruction of the life of the Church. But one thing belongs to this in any case : that the Bible should no longer remain so very foreign to the members of our churches, but should again become really the book of the Church and of the home."

*

The *Stuttgart Bible Society* has again issued, for the first time since the war, its large octavo edition of the Nestlé Greek New Testament on writing paper, with large margins to allow for personal annotations. This book was in great demand before the war among theological teachers and students.

The same Society has also published its first post-war edition of the Schlachter Bible, a ' modern ' translation in German which has been much in demand for private use in Southern Germany, as well as the Luther and Menge Bibles.

■

The Altenburg Bible Society is now printing a first edition of 80,000 copies of the Acts of the Apostles in magazine format. St. Luke's Gospel, in the same presentation, was published last year and has met with a most encouraging response.

Guatemala

Mr. J. W. Limkemann, the American Bible Society agent in Central America, sent in the following information at the end of March :

" To have part in the work of Scripture distribution in an area that is so ready to receive the Bible is a thrilling experience. The following is a paragraph from a letter from Guatemala written in January, 1952 : ' The Gospel has become so much a part of the people here, that we find every door open for proclaiming it, and every hand extended to receive any part of it. The whole life of this country is being transformed by it.'

" Last October, during a colportage campaign in Guatemala City, forty students in training at the Central American Bible Institute, sold 22,500 Portions of Scripture in less than a week. Others too have reported glowingly of the success in placing Scriptures in the hands of the people.

" The following points up the soul hunger of the people, and shows how the Protestant Church is growing. About two years ago a young farmer came to Guatemala City from a town 25 miles away. He asked for a book of prayers and hymns. When a Bible was offered instead, he declared that his people not only had a Bible, but that by reading it sixty men and grown boys had formed a new church, which they called ' The Church of the Holy Faith.' Now they wanted a book to sing from. Through the ministry of Christian men who visited them from Guatemala City, they came to a clearer understanding of the Gospel message, and many of the group have made a definite commitment of life to Christ. This incident causes us to ask : Has not Christ commissioned us to *go* with the Gospel ? But people now search us out, and *ask* for it ! It was quite different sixty years ago . . . . . .

" Without question, this is a day of opportunity. More people know how to read than ever before. Barriers of prejudice are crumbling all around

us. Circulation of whole Bibles increased 35% in one year, and that in spite of the shortages that we had to contend with in 1951. It is not easy to imagine what would happen if during the next three or four years there were an abundant supply and an adequate corps of workers to cover the field with the same pioneering spirit that impelled courageous souls sixty years ago to venture into Central America to offer the Bible to the people . . . . . ."

Hongkong

A new agent of the B.F.B.S., Mr. D. Lancashire, has been appointed for the Hongkong Joint Agency of the A.B.S., B.F.B.S. and N.B.S.S. He will help Mr. David McGavin (of the N.B.S.S.) in the growing work of the Bible Society there. In 1950 almost 1,350,000 Scriptures were printed in Hongkong, and over 1,900,000 in 1951. Plans have been adopted for the printing of over 2 million Scriptures this year.

Hungary

The *Hungarian Bible Council* has issued three separate tentative editions of the Synoptic Gospels in the new translation based on the original texts and on the old Károli translation. In the preface, the chairman of the Hungarian Bible Council writes :

" If the Church wants to remain the Church, this is necessarily interdependent on the preaching of God's Word. This and the listening to the preaching of God's Word by which a church is called into being. God's Word governs and regulates the life of the Church. It gives life to the members of the Church, directs her work of charity. Consequently the most important task and service of the Church on this earth is to take care of everything which has been entrusted to her in connection with God's Word. This task is—together with the preaching and the listening obediently to the Word—to provide for God's Word as Holy Scriptures. God's message must be presented to all men always in clearly expressed and readable languages of each corresponding age . . . . . .

" Let us express our thanks with full hearts, that, when the self-sacrificing work of a foreign private society to publish the Hungarian Bible, has been stopped, it has pleased God to provide that Hungarian evangelical christendom should take this task upon herself. Indeed, the evangelical churches in Hungary have obeyed God's command in a true spirit of ecumenicity.

" It would not be becoming to praise the scholarly work of the Committee of Revision in a preface of a trial edition. Neither is it necessary to repeat what we have stated in the preface of the similar trial edition of the Book of Genesis already. The aim of what we want to say now is no more than to express thanks, and to bear witness. To express thanks, because such a blessed work could have been done among us and for us, moreover so undisturbedly and efficiently, expressing thanks at the same time for the promises and encouragements given to Hungarian evangelical christendom by the Lord of the Church through the continuity of this work. We also want to bear witness to the fact which has been mentioned in the preface of the Book of Genesis already : 'When Hungarian evangelical christendom was yet—as people say—rich and free, it did not have the strength to carry the responsibility for the Hungarian Bible alone and had to rely on the benevolence of a foreign society. Yet the inner renewal of the Hungarian churches, since 1945, has tackled this problem too, giving thereby an evidence that the real Church, also in the midst of a socialistic development, is being zealously and freely built.' "

Israel

7,400 Bibles, 6,709 New Testaments and 4,905 Portions, a total of 19,014 copies of the Scriptures, were circulated last year in Israel—more than three times the circulation of the previous year.

The Rev. E. T. Allen of the Church Missions to Jews, writes in this connection :

" I have only been in the country for just over a month, but it is long enough to be able to see that there is here an open door and opportunities for personal evangelism do not have to be sought . . . . . .

" I am sitting in the Bible shop in Haifa, which is in a very strategic position just by a bus stop. A soldier comes in and buys a Hebrew Bible for himself and a Rumanian one for his wife. ' Yes,' he says, ' I want the New Testament as well.'

" A few minutes later a young schoolboy comes in. ' Have you a Bible with the New Testament, as we are having lessons from it at school.' While he is still there, another man comes in and buys a Bible. In one day, a few weeks ago, over £100 worth of Bibles were sold. The difficulty is to be able to get enough Bibles from England to be able to meet the demand, and the variety of languages in which they are asked for is beyond description . . . . . ."

The Church Missions to the Jews' Bible bookshop in Tel Aviv reports an important increase in Scripture circulation in 1951. 165 Old Testaments, 1,065 Portions of the Old Testament, 978 Bibles and 131 New Testaments were sold in 24 languages, the bulk of which were in Hebrew. During the same period 1,239 New Testaments and 937 Gospels were distributed free of charge. These had been provided mainly by the Scripture Gift Mission and the Million Testaments Campaign. The bookshop manager notes that many people respect and are interested in the New Testament, which they have never read before.

Japan

By the end of April, 1952 the *Japan Bible Society* was able to complete its programme, started in April 1949, to circulate in three years 10 million copies of the Scriptures.

The new target for this year is one million New Testaments and 2 million Portions.

Kenya

The Rev. E. K. Cole reports as follows on the reception given last year to the first Kikuyu Bible :

" This year is a landmark in the transmission of the Bible among the Kikuyu tribe. For many years they have had the New Testament in their own language, but this year has seen the arrival of the first complete copies of the Old Testament. People formed queues to purchase it at the C.M.S. Bookshop in Nairobi. Our students here were thrilled when it was first read to them. When in England for his consecration Bishop Stanway was presented with the first copy of the Kikuyu Old Testament which was specially bound in advance for him.

" The Kahuhia Normal School has a well-earned reputation in educational and other circles. The Commandant of the Kenya Police Training Centre said to me recently : ' One of my best sub-inspectors was one of your boys.' Chapel services provide a wonderful field for spiritual education and evangelism and have been a means for many to grow in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. These times afford an opportunity for systematic Bible teaching, and as we now have the Kikuyu Old Testament, I am spending the year going through it."

Korea

The Rev. Young Bin Im, general secretary of the *Korean Bible Society*, has returned to Pusan. He has been staying for some months in Tokyo, where he supervised the production of the Korean Bible in Japan and also prepared the first edition of the Bible in the new Hankul characters (see BULLETIN No. 7). This Bible is being set in Pusan. The circulation of Korean Scriptures in 1951 exceeded one million copies. About one-tenth of them were reserved for Korean refugees in Japan.

Mexico

27,929 Bibles, 23,291 New Testaments and 188,064 Portions, in all 239,284 copies of the Scriptures, were circulated by the Mexico agency of the American Bible Society last year, an increase of 56% over 1950 and 80% over 1949. With regard to contributions, the progress reported in 1950 ($47,000 as against $29,000 the year before) has been slightly increased ($48,000). " There is a reason for all this," writes the Rev. Paul A. Collyer. " The Mexico agency's fiscal year 1951 was the first full year in which its recently formed Advisory Council operated. The fact that the Council was organised before the year ending October 31st, 1950 was half gone explains the advances recorded in that year also. Soon after the formation of the Council in March, 1950 the members were hard at work stimulating the churches of their own denominations, not only to see that the Scriptures were more widely distributed but that the gifts of the churches were increased. Of the 1950 distribution of 129,155 volumes, Secretary Marroquin reported : ' It can be ascertained that 70% of them went into the hands of non-evangelical people, the majority of whom profess the Roman Catholic faith.'

" The formation of the Mexico Agency's Advisory Council on March 22nd, 1950 was possibly the greatest forward step in the long history of the agency."

Mozambique

Reporting on developments in the area of the Swiss Mission in South Africa, the Rev. A. D. Clerc describes new progress in the study of the Bible among young people in Mozambique :

" It is both the originality and the merit of the Ronga-Tonga church that it gives the responsibility for religious teaching of its young people to teams. The first rudiments are contained in the charter of the teams. The beginners learn to listen to the call of Jesus Christ and to make a stand in face of the corruption in their surroundings. So far, religious instruction of catechumens has been given with the help of the Bible and of duplicated texts. Last year the teachers used a programme leading to the personal reading of the Bible. First of all, the young people had to make an effort to purchase a Bible for themselves. (The smallest candidates, who are

semi-literate, had for their part to read the easy texts of the *Life of Jesus* by Dr. Laubach). Then, from week to week, good portions of the Bible were read at home and the most suggestive passages were taken up in class in order to draw from them useful teaching. In Lourenço Marques more than 120 Bibles were sold to young people in a few months. This effort, however, was stopped abruptly because the stocks of Bibles were exhausted.

"In examining the work of the teams, I assured myself that on the whole the boys were aware of what the Bible is. Without hesitation, they could find any book in the Old Testament, read and understand what they were reading. Not without ingenuousness, one of the teachers said to me : 'My boys know how to handle their Bible. Several of them have discovered that the Bible is an interesting book !' "

North Africa

Nearly 80% of the soldiers of the Foreign Legion are German. The Altenburg Bible Society (Eastern Germany) has provided the B.F.B.S. depot in Algiers with a number of illustrated Gospels of St. Luke in German. The Regional Protestant Chaplain of the French Forces in North Africa visits the Foreign Legion regularly and circulates many Scriptures in various European languages among these men.

Northern Rhodesia

After 14 years' indefatigable work on the part of two missionaries, Mr. and Mrs. Jalla, the whole Bible has just been published in the Lozi tongue by the British and Foreign Bible Society. Lozi is the language of the inhabitants of Barotseland, in Northern Rhodesia. The fact that Lozi Bibles are now being circulated in the churches founded by the Zambesi Mission is an event to which missionaries attach very great importance, writes Pastor Marc Boegner, who recently visited South Africa.

The presentation of the first copies was a very solemn occasion. Pastor Boegner, President of the Protestant Federation of France, was asked, during a ceremony at Limulunga, to present the first copy to King Mwanawina of the Malozis. During a solemn service held at Séfula on Sunday, 11th May, Pastor Boegner presented the Bible to the faithful, and then gave one copy to the delegate of each of the churches, in the presence of the presbyters of the Bulozi Church.

Scotland

The *National Bible Society of Scotland* has just issued an edition of St. John's Gospel in Senoi, the first part of the Bible to be translated in that language. This tongue is spoken by an aboriginal tribe in the forests of Malaya (Sakais) and the translation is the work of Mr. B. W. F. Napitoepoeloe, from Battack, Indonesia, who has worked among the Sakais for over 20 years. Very few of these people are able to read, but Mr. Napitoepoeloe has been teaching a number of them and no doubt the standard of literacy will slowly rise. Previously only a very few selections from the Gospels had been translated into Senoi. The present Gospel was printed in Singapore.

■

The Board of Directors of the N.B.S.S. has agreed to institute a Biblical Essay Competition for school children, in the first instance in Edinburgh Secondary schools. Prizes will be awarded to pupils in each of the schools

agreeing to participate in the competition, and there will also be special prizes to be awarded to the writers of the best essays from all schools taking part.

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The Scottish Colportage Society has utilised a grant from the N.B.S.S. to procure and equip a new van to encourage the sale of Scriptures, particularly in outlying areas of Scotland. The van started its first expedition on 9th June.

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Students of the Bible Training Institute of Glasgow have undertaken colportage work in one of the new housing areas, and it is intended to make this a regular activity in future as part of the students' training.

Somaliland (British)

Authorisation has now been given to the B.F.B.S. to distribute Scriptures in British Somaliland, after an embargo of 40 years. Although the translation of several portions of the Bible has been completed, no editions have so far been produced by the Society in the Somali tongue of this area, since no decision has yet been taken by the government with regard to the use of roman or arabic script into which the language will have to be officially transliterated.

United States of America

The year 1951 was the largest in the *American Bible Society's* 117 years of service to the blind, reports Miss S. R. Barrett, A.B.S. secretary for work among the blind. A total of 35,940 embossed volumes and Talking Book Records were distributed to the sightless at home and in foreign lands.

During the year, the Society published a new edition of the Bible in Braille Grade 2, King James Version in 18 bulky volumes.

Completion of the Bible on the new 10-inch Talking Book Records brought increasing appeals from the blind, especially those who are unable to read with their fingertips. The whole Bible is on 170 records ; the Old Testament on 130 and the New Testament on 40.

In Latin America there was a considerably larger distribution of the Scriptures in Spanish Braille and in Portugese Braille.

The Gospel of Luke was published in Portugese Braille for the first time in 1951.

Early in the year a large shipment of Braille paper was sent to Japan from which the Japan Bible Society produced and distributed over 6,000 Japanese Braille volumes. A new edition of the Gospel of Luke in Korean Braille was also printed in Tokyo, all previous editions of Korean Scriptures having been destroyed with the fall of Seoul.

The Society aided in the publication of several hundred volumes of the Scriptures in German Braille for the needy in Germany ; and the making of plates for the Scriptures in Arabic, Armenian and Turkish Braille for the blind of the Near East was begun. Amharic is the latest language that the A.B.S. has produced in Braille. The Gospels of Luke and John and the Book of Proverbs were sent by the Society to Ethiopia earlier this year.

The American Bible Society distributed the Scriptures to the blind in 35 languages and systems up to the end of 1951.

*

Out in California, the A.B.S. has established Scripture outlets through the depots of the Greyhound Bus Lines. Attractive, clear plastic containers holding about a hundred Gospel portions are used. From 53 centres in the state, in which a total of 274 local ministers co-operated with the Society in establishing, financing and maintaining this service last year, more than 192,000 Gospel portions were distributed.

*

The dual themes, 'Search the Scriptures' and 'Share the Scriptures' were adopted by the A.B.S. for its 1952 Bible Seals. Lowell Thomas, noted news commentator, again spearheaded the distribution of the Seals as honorary chairman. The Seals, which are postage stamp size, were printed in three colours. In 1951 the Bible Seals campaign added 73,745 new donors to the Society.

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A record distribution of the Scriptures during 1951 was reported by the American Bible Society at its 136th annual meeting held in New York City on 8th May. Total distribution in the United States amounted to : 509,066 Bibles, 944,234 New Testaments and 6,548,704 Portions, making a final total of 8,002,004. Abroad the A.B.S. distributed 443,600 Bibles, 969,080 New Testaments and 6,587,261 Portions, making a total of 7,999,941. This means that the Society distributed 16,001,945 copies of the Scriptures at home and abroad during 1951, which exceeded by 20% the total of any year in the Society's history. This work was done in 149 languages. The Scriptures were circulated in the United States in 88 languages and in its foreign agencies in 112.

*

The Visual Materials Department of the A.B.S. is circulating a new motion picture called 'Bible on the Table', a 16mm sound, black and white film that runs for 28 minutes. It is a practical, down-to-earth episode in the lives of two Christian families, only one of which practices daily family worship utilising the Bible. This is not an A.B.S. production ; however, the picture presents many aspects of daily Bible reading and family worship which the A.B.S. wishes to encourage.

*

The Radio Department of the A.B.S. is arranging for the production of five new recorded dramatic programmes featuring the Society's work for use on local stations during the five weeks of Worldwide Bible Reading, Thanksgiving to Christmas. Similar programmes were successfully produced and presented in last year's observance. These programmes are part of a 52-weekly series which is released only to stations who guarantee their use at the fixed time each week, and because there are now 261 stations using this material, a wide listening public is secured.

*

1,000 copies of the Gospel of Mark in Zapoteco del Istmo (Mexico), the first book of the Bible to be translated and published in that language, came off the press in April. It is a diglot edition with the Valera Spanish printed down the inside of the page.

Of the 75,000 Zapoteco Indians living in Mexico, about half are literate, predominantly in Spanish. Some eight hundred of the Indians have been educated in various colleges and universities, mostly in Mexico City. The

reading public is therefore potentially large, so this Gospel of Mark should find a ready acceptance. There are between 100 and 150 church members among them under the care of native Nazarene and Baptist leaders.

*

On 19th March the presses of three printing plants in the U.S.A. started printing the first million copies edition of the Bible in the Revised Standard Version, which is due to appear on the market at the end of September. The New Testament in that version was first issued in 1946. Thomas Nelson & Sons, New York, are the publishers of both the New Testament and the Bible. Plates of the new Bible have also been sent to Edinburgh, where Bibles will be published for other areas of the English-speaking world.

*

The Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. met in February and devoted a large part of its agenda to the place of the Bible in religious education. 1,300 leaders of forty Protestant denominations, some from Canada, were present, and they made a first acquaintance with the forthcoming edition of the Revised Standard Version Bible.

" How to read, how to live, and how to share this Revised Standard Version," reports Frances Heron in the National Council Outlook, " held the attention of the conference delegates, responsible for formulating plans for lesson materials for 27 million Sunday school pupils. They studied the place of the Bible in Sunday school materials, in vacation church schools in weekday church schools, in public education, in family life and in world missions . . . . . .

" The use of the Bible in teaching called forth many comments, suggestions and plans. Dr. Ralph D. Heim, professor of Christian education and English Bible at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, reported that research by his students revealed that ' many people do not know the Bible, many do not comprehend it, and many are in error as to its teaching.' The main idea the average reader gets out of the Bible, he said, is ' Johnny, be good.' . . . . . .

" Dr. John C. Trever, head of the department of the English Bible of the Division of Christian Education, announced that churches of all denominations across the land are now lining up Bible study courses for Sunday school teachers for next fall . . . . . "

Roman Catholicism and the Bible

Austria : In reply to letters which he had written to the editor of a Roman Catholic church paper in Vienna, and to the authorities of the Roman Catholic Church, concerning the condemnation of Protestant editions of the Bible (see BULLETIN No. 10, p. 28), Bishop D. May has been informed that this ' slip-up ' of the church paper has been condemned and will not be repeated. With regard to the assertion of the Catholic paper that Protestant editions of the Bible contain not a few portions which have been intentionally incorrectly translated in the Protestant interpretation, or entirely omit certain verses and sentences, Bishop May was sent an essay by the Roman Catholic New Testament professor at Vienna university. In this essay, it is

stated that in the New Testament " in the Protestant translation from the original text, there is as good as nothing which is omitted and the many (intentional and unintentional) errors in the Luther translation have largely been removed by repeated revisions." The essay then states that there are, of course, still some errors of translation which are connected with the Lutheran teaching on justification, but the decisive factor connected with the Catholic prohibition of Protestant editions of the Bible is that these contain only the text and no explanatory notes, and are therefore not protected against arbitrary interpretations. In answer to this point, Bishop May made it clear that on the Protestant side there are also editions of the Bible with explanatory notes.

Belgium : The Missionary Sisters of the Holy Spirit at Antwerp have circulated, independently, during the course of the last six months more than 1,500 Gospels in the populous parishes in and round about Antwerp.

France : The second edition of the Bible of Cardinal Liénart (see BULLETIN No. 7, p. 20), which was printed in 42,000 copies, and sold by subscription, is now out of print. A third edition will soon be coming off the press. In 1951 over 5,000 copies of the Bible were sold in Canada and over 4,000 in Belgium.

On 5th January, 1952, his Holiness Pope Pius XII, who had welcomed to Rome a delegation of the *Société Civile d'Etudes et de Publications non commerciales*, conducted by Canon H. Renard, which had come to offer him a copy of the Bible published under the direction of Cardinal Liénart and with the patronage of the *Ligue Catholique de l'Evangile* sent a letter to his Eminence Cardinal Liénart, which has already been published in the press.

The most important passages from this letter are as follows :

" His Holiness was already informed of this plan to put the treasure of the Holy Scriptures within the reach of priests and the faithful, outside of the normal commercial ways and under conditions appropriate to the needs and possibilities of the present age. He cannot but rejoice at the happy conclusion of this praise-worthy enterprise and gladly wishes that such a judicious initiative may have all the extension which seems possible and desirable to your Eminence.

" Your Eminence will wish to make himself the interpreter of these paternal encouragements to the devoted collaborators who surround him and whose efforts, according to your own statement, do but serve the holy Church in a spirit of entire and filial submission."

Lebanon : The agent of the Bible Society in Beirut, Mr. F. E. Accad, reported to the Advisory Council of the Bible Society in Syria and Lebanon, on the difficulties which have been met in the publication of the Jesuit translation of the Bible in Arabic. (See BULLETIN No. 3, p. 23).

The Jesuit Fathers had agreed to print for the Bible Society an edition of 10,000 copies of the Bible in their well-known translation, without the Apocrypha and the notes but with the *imprimatur*. The books were ready for binding when the Jesuit Fathers informed the Bible Society that they had received instructions from Rome and that they could not deliver the books with *imprimatur*. The indications that the books were ' printed in the Catholic Press ' and that this was ' the version of 1878 ' were retained.

World Circulation by National Bible Societies, 1951

It should be remembered that although the following circulation figures are given by countries, in most of these the work is not done by national Bible Societies, but by the agencies of the larger Societies. Even where the work is carried out by a national Society, these are in many cases supported from abroad.

Country	*Bibles*	*Testaments*	*Portions*	*Total*
AFRICA :				
North	3,472	6,089	58,787	68,348
South	167,492	87,231	70,202	324,925
East, West & Central	356,852	169,972	77,753	604,577
Eritrea	191	296	252	739
Sudan	649	3,805	28,229	32,683
ARABIA	40	87	1,201	1,328
ARGENTINA	49,676	49,745	757,825	857,246
AUSTRALIA	38,301	28,037	141,466	207,804
AUSTRIA	14,043	7,222	41,247	62,512
BELGIUM	11,563	12,881	26,041	50,485
BOLIVIA	6,258	11,185	52,487	69,930
BRAZIL	168,670	118,894	1,223,148	1,510,712
BURMA	6,631	16,442	29,627	52,700
CANADA	73,857	69,846	225,208	368,911
CANAL ZONE	716	1,065	3,929	5,710
CHILE	17,907	25,849	137,390	181,146
COLOMBIA	7,623	3,756	124,820	136,199
COSTA RICA	1,422	1,840	9,715	12,977
CUBA	21,774	34,220	326,108	382,102
CYPRUS	818	1,307	3,301	5,426
CZECHOSLOVAKIA	2,209	512	101	2,822
DENMARK	22,484	61,663	572	84,719
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC ...	2,003	5,000	31,000	38,003
ECUADOR	3,504	6,372	51,962	61,838
EGYPT	6,033	17,459	67,668	91,160
EL SALVADOR	2,604	2,289	48,356	53,249
ENGLAND & WALES		(No figures received)		
ETHIOPIA	1,592	1,132	11,112	13,836
FINLAND	18,172	16,009	3,347	37,528
FRANCE	32,624	48,858	92,062	173,544
GERMANY...	437,712	166,782	172,879	777,373
GREECE	5,951	26,204	84,237	116,392
GUATEMALA	7,067	5,310	116,473	128,850
HAITI	3,350	2,832	5,750	11,932
HASHEMITE KINGDOM ...	2,410	2,679	8,225	13,314
HONDURAS	1,927	769	30,285	32,981

Country	*Bibles*	*Testaments*	*Portions*	*Total*
HONGKONG & FORMOSA ...	36,522	171,830	559,610	767,962
INDIA, PAKISTAN & CEYLON	58,345	74,392	786,926	919,663
INDO-CHINA	3,000	1,000	26,000	30,000
INDONESIA	4,779	62,377	65,959	133,115
IRAQ	666	1,140	10,867	12,673
IRELAND	6,056	12,950	29,688	48,694
ISRAEL	7,400	6,709	4,905	19,014
ITALY	10,777	9,306	99,501	119,584
JAPAN	56,550	409,447	2,890,415	3,356,412
KOREA	35,627	206,400	701,615	943,642
MALAYA	9,052	5,863	97,360	112,275
MEXICO	27,929	23,291	188,064	239,284
NETHERLANDS	130,161	31,696	69,466	231,323
NEW ZEALAND (8 months) ...	4,802	4,878	5,915	15,595
NICARAGUA	2,069	1,057	17,125	20,251
NORWAY	28,716	78,218	54,639	161,573
PACIFIC ISLANDS	—	5,000	2,000	7,000
PANAMA	3,468	1,555	18,134	23,157
PARAGUAY	2,820	3,890	15,684	22,394
PERSIA	426	948	31,005	32,379
PERU	15,047	11,820	65,504	92,371
PHILIPPINES	30,900	11,614	91,979	134,493
POLAND	21,400	10,659	58,502	90,561
PORTUGAL	5,541	11,286	209,319	226,146
PUERTO RICO	14,281	17,096	117,899	149,276
SCOTLAND	52,875	31,945	54,740	139,560
SPAIN	1,505	4,512	18,397	24,414
SWEDEN	9,562	23,124	4,241	36,927
SWITZERLAND	13,010	2,270	1,563	16,843
SYRIA & LEBANON	3,508	2,722	33,400	39,630
THAILAND	1,049	2,307	161,245	164,601
TURKEY	654	688	9,467	10,809
U.S.A.	509,066	944,234	6,548,704	8,002,004
URUGUAY...	4,842	5,613	38,600	49,055
VENEZUELA	8,873	6,949	155,884	171,706
VIRGIN ISLANDS	109	—	—	109
WEST INDIES	23,471	12,318	72,577	108,366
YUGOSLAVIA	332	1,380	7,385	9,097
Miscellaneous	708	5,225	5,158	11,091
Grand Totals	2,643,495	3,231,348	17,392,207*	23,267,050

* Includes copies of the Sermon on the Mount, abridged editions of the Bible and selections circulated by certain societies

1950 Figures	2,497,208	3,424,748	15,878,271	21,800,227
1949 Figures	1,893,910	3,777,526	13,091,906	19,819,033

Miscellaneous

The Scripture Gift Mission circulated last year in 224 languages and 171 countries and islands, 34,694 Bibles, 91,845 New Testaments, 1,076,970 Portions and 3,297,463 booklets or leaflets of selections. In these figures are included a total of 171,332 copies distributed to H.M. Forces through the Naval and Military Bible Society, a sister society of the S.G.M.

Selections have been published in two languages in which no part of the Bible text has yet been printed : Ngalia, spoken by a small tribe in Southern Australia, and Tchad Arabic, spoken in French Equatorial Africa.

The S.G.M. has issued selections in 10 languages in which the society itself had never before published, and new or revised booklets in 126 languages.

■

Israel is the ninth nation to ratify the U.N.E.S.C.O. convention on the removal of obstacles to the import of educational, scientific and cultural material ; for this convention to enter into force, the ratification of only one more signatory State is now needed.

■

Dr. F. Laubach has prepared a revised and somewhat simplified edition of his well-known *Story of Jesus*, which he has been using in most of his literacy campaigns. In 1951 the *Story of Jesus* was translated into 20 new languages.

■

The Y.M.C.A. headquarters in Geneva have just issued 100,000 copies of the English edition of a world-wide Bible Reading Plan for 1953, in order to encourage regular Bible reading and to prepare for the celebration of the centenary of the Y.M.C.A. in 1955. Editions of this Plan have been prepared also in Dutch, Norwegian, Swedish, German, French and Spanish. Danish, Japanese, Korean, Malayalam, Italian and Russian editions are being considered.

The Plan is to be published under the title " One World," in illustrated magazine format and in 32 pages, as a special issue of the Y.M.C.A. *World Communique*. Introducing the Plan, the editor writes :—

" This daily Reading Plan is based on the sequence of the Church's year, which carries us in thought from Christmas to Easter, to Pentecost and out ' into all the world.' It is a striking fact that, while still unfamiliar to many, ' the Church's year ' is one of the oldest links between members of the three great Confessions : Roman Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant.

" This Plan, which will be published for the first time internationally in connection with this 1952 Week of Prayer, was initiated by the German Y.M.C.A. in 1852. It is published in Germany by Protestant and Roman Catholic Church publishing houses and links some three million Church, Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A. members."

■

The Rev. Richard C. Smith has published in the January 1952 issue of ' Theology To-day,' some reflections on a survey he made on the place of the Church and Christianity in coal mining areas. Mr. Smith has detected an evident deterioration of Christian convictions in most areas he visited, accompanied by much mistrust and disregard of the Church. Dealing with the place occupied by the Bible, he writes :

" The net result of this spiritual disintegration in the coalfields has been that while there are some coal areas, such as northern Belgium and Scotland,

for example, that are still essentially Christian in mind, culture and worship there are other larger areas, such as most American and Canadian coal fields, where the culture and civilisation remain Christian but where Christian practice is restricted to small groups.

" Moreover, there are still other sections in the Kingdom of Coal, such as parts of France and America, where both culture and practice have become almost completely pagan. If in the first situation it may be said that the coal miner daily opens the Bible and in the second situation that he opens it only on special religious holidays, in the third situation it may be stated that he has closed the Bible or discarded it altogether.

" Here it is only truthful to say that the second and third situations—those of the closing and the closed Book—are currently most representative of the Kingdom of Coal. I have acquired first-hand knowledge of the miner's personal life in these situations both in the course of my travels and in the course of my work as a mine-town missionary. This information relates, first of all, to the disintegration of the miner's personal and family religion. I have found, for example, an almost complete disappearance of family prayers including grace before meals. I have met coal miners by the thousand in several countries who not only do not know how to pray but who have not the slighest interest in learning. Moreover, I have discovered other thousands with little or no knowledge of the Bible and also a great many coal miners who have never possessed one. This last situation would be serious enough if it were characteristic solely of adults but unfortunately, as vacation and weekday church school clearly reveals, it is true of children as well. Hence, it is true to say that in vast numbers of mine towns all over the world, the Book is either closing or has been for several generations already closed."

REGIONAL CONFERENCE OF BIBLE TRANSLATORS DJAKARTA (INDONESIA), 17-31, MAY 1952

JAN L. SWELLENGREBEL

THIS conference was already announced in the last number of this BULLETIN (No. 10, p.21), and its main purpose was then stated. Readers will perhaps be interested to hear something now about the topics under discussion.

One of the items that had loomed rather large in the preparation of the conference was a list of renderings of biblical terms in several languages of Indonesia. That list had been compiled from data supplied by the different translators and it was hoped that it would help to clarify the discussion a great deal. In that discussion we hoped to profit by one another's experience in seeking for adequate equivalents for the most important bibical terms and this hope has been fulfilled. We have been able to reach greater unity of outlook and in some instances have found a solution for certain problems in this connection. The discussion, however, did take much more time than was originally planned and we therefore only treated less than one-tenth of the terms listed. It is hoped that some of the data compiled will appear in THE BIBLE TRANSLATOR in the near future.

A special problem of this kind, special both in importance and in difficulty, was the rendering of the names used for God in the Old Testament. Here the conference had for its guidance three preliminary statements, two from Bible translators and one from a teacher at the theological seminary. After a

rather heated discussion and further study in committee, it was possible to formulate a kind of working hypothesis which seemed acceptable to most members of the conference. In the coming months this working hypothesis will have to be elaborated for the Indonesian language and some of the regional languages.

Subjects of a more general kind were introduced into the discussions by lectures from some of the members of the conference. Dr. L. Onvlee, from Sumba, spoke about " The Present Position of Bible Translation in the Work of the Indonesian Churches," stressing the need for close collaboration. The Rev. P. Middelkoop, from Timor, told us about the difficulties in finding real equivalents for biblical terms in a language with a cultural and historical background very different from that of the biblical languages. Dr. H. van der Veen, from Malino, where he is translating the Old Testament into the Tae language of the Southern Toradja's, spoke about the possibility of using poetical language (often bound up with religious rites of the people) in translating the poetical parts of the Bible. His lecture abounded in very interesting examples from several languages of Indonesia.

Approximately two days were devoted to discussing the revision of the Bible in the Indonesian language. The pressing need of a revision in the shortest possible time was stressed by many contributions and appeals. Here, as in many other instances, the presence of the Rev. W. J. Bradnock and Dr. E. A. Nida, secretaries for translation work of the B.F.B.S. and A.B.S. respectively, was very helpful. Their experience with revisions in several parts of the world was brought to bear upon several important items of practice and principle.

But, assisted by Mrs. Nida, these two guests rendered a service to the conference—and to the readers of THE BIBLE TRANSLATOR—in a still further way, as they have taken upon themselves the task of preparing an English report about the conference, which will be published in the October issue of THE BIBLE TRANSLATOR. Together with the English interpreter, Dr. B. R. Kramers, or with some of the conference members, they worked over many of the preparatory papers, all the lectures and summaries of the discussions and transformed them into readable articles which, it is hoped, will be of some use for Bible translators all over the world. So the writer of the present article can end these few remarks by referring the reader to a report which will give him more and better insight into the matters brought before this conference.

ENVOYS OF PEACE

J. ERIC FENN

EACH year one of my major responsibilities is the preparation of the Popular Report of the British and Foreign Bible Society. This involves reading through the reports from agents all over the world, thinking over the work, and then finding a theme on which to base a popular account of the previous year's work.

As I did this preliminary work in the early months of this year, one very strong impression was left on my mind : faithfulness. All over the world, in the most diverse situations, literally thousands of men and women have been engaged throughout the year 1951 in the work of Bible distribution. Some—the minority—are the paid servants of the Bible Society, others are pastors and missionaries, others voluntary workers of all kinds. They

belong to almost every Christian denomination and to many different nations. There are translators who spend day after day seeking the right words in a foreign tongue. There are those, like the colporteurs in Persia and Egypt, who have had to go out into a heated political atmosphere knowing they risked the violence of the mob. There are those who work utterly alone, trudging the dusty roads day after day in the Andes or the hills of Burma. There are those who walk from house to house in western cities asking for contributions to the work, or who give long hours to committee work planning to meet the needs of their own country or of the world. Some work in the midst of religious revival, as in Brazil and other South American countries, while others face a situation where interest in religion is lukewarm, if not wholly lacking. And all the time, in printing shops and binderies, in Britain, America, Africa, Australasia, Hongkong and India, the work of craftsmen feeds the supply-lines with books in over a thousand languages. The work has become a great international co-operative enterprise in which the Bible Societies of the world, the Missionary Societies, the Churches and countless individual Christians all take their part. And the common characteristic, whether of craftsmen in the printing shop, or of colporteurs or of collectors, is faithfulness.

Faithfulness—in what ? In a very simple task : the translation, printing and distribution of a book. Put baldly like that, it is incredible. Here is a world in desperate need of the very elemental things on which life depends—food, security, health : and we offer—a book ! In Japan, over-populated already and with a rapidly increasing number of mouths to feed ; in India, where the poverty of the villager must be seen to be believed ; in Korea, ploughed deep by the terrible instruments of mechanized warfare ; in China, convulsed by a great revolution ; in Africa where men are moving almost overnight from simple tribal poverty into the bewildering ways of industrial life ; in Europe, scarcely recovered from one war and already having to arm against the possibility of the next—in a world where nothing seems stable and where millions go hungry and in bitter sorrow—we offer a book ! " What man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone ?"

Moreover, the wastage must be enormous. The Bible Societies of the world have in this last year scattered some twenty millions of these books about the world. What has happened to them ? How many lie forgotten on some shelf or in some chest, along with other idle purchases ? In the pages which follow there do not lack instances where this book has done its mysterious work in a man's soul : but what of the others ? We do not know. Sometimes they may lie hidden for fifteen years and then be discovered and prove their power to change men's lives. Sometimes they must just lie, ignored.

Yet the work goes on and secures, year after year, the enthusiastic support of millions of people. That, too, is part of the strange power of the book itself. It is not so irrelevant to the needs of men as might appear. Men need bread, security, health—yes, but why do they lack these things ? Why are the vast energies of the world not directed to the relief of human need ? Why do we still lack that positive and health-giving peace which would draw us into a true commonwealth of mutual service ? Why has peace become that ugly and disgraceful thing, a " cold war "? What is the matter with us ?

There we strike the nerve of things. The book we are concerned with has very clear and definite things to say about the dispeace of mankind, and it does not allow us to shuffle responsibility off on to any scapegoat. When you read the Bible, it cuts through our fatal tendency to blame others for

the state of the world—the Russians or the Chinese, or the " American Imperialists " or Capitalism or Socialism or any of the other spectres which roam our imaginations. Here is a physician not to be impressed by symptoms but going straight to the root of the malady in the human heart. The vast and terrifying problems which keep the world on edge are here brought to simple and disturbing focus in the chaos of the human being, and there, in that tiny fragment of the universe which is myself, it lays bare the root of all that threatens the life of the world. Not only so, but the cure is offered with the diagnosis. The power is there by which peace can be restored to the distracted human soul and healing can begin.

In spite of the great mechanized instruments by which men now wage war, battles are still won or lost by men and the issue depends, ultimately, on the decision and endurance of the human will. So is it also with peace : it must be won first within each of us if it is to be secured among the nations. A world of selfish, acquisitive individuals can only be kept in a semblance of peace by the overriding power of tyranny or by some precarious balance of power. For any other kind of peace we must become different people, and that is impossible unless there is some power not of ourselves which can remake us. Because it proclaims that Power, because in it man finds himself confronted by a God who shows him not only what he is but how he can become what he ought to be, because there is here made plain a way of peace which is not man's invention but God's gift, the Bible is disturbingly relevant to our modern world in all its agony.

Thus, the men and women who spend their time and energy and substance in putting this book into men's hands are not offering stones for bread. They are envoys of peace in a world which has forgotten where peace begins. The problems which remain before that inner peace can take form in the world are many and are formidable ; but here in the Bible is an issue which can only be ignored at man's peril. It puts the whole matter on a level which is at once deeper and more hopeful than the endless discussions of men of the world.

We cannot, of course, ensure that people will take this seriously. The Bible Society's task is to supply them with the book which contains God's declaration of peace. We do know, however, after nearly 150 year's experience, that the Scriptures vindicate the claim made for them : they are a means by which, year by year, the living God lays hold of the hearts and minds of men.

AFRICA REVISITED

JOHN T. WATSON

LIKE most of the readers of this BULLETIN, if not all, I suppose I spent a good many hours of my school life trying to see through the intricate reasoning of what at the time seemed to be a very long series of propositions by the Greek mathematician Euclid. My readers will doubtless recall how Euclid invariably followed a set plan in presenting his theorems : beginning with some statement which he wished to show to be either true or false, he thereupon proceeded to demonstrate that it was so. In writing this article I am going to take a leaf out of Euclid's book, and beginning with what I consider to be three statements of fact about Africa to-day, I will try to show that, in my view at least, these three statements *are* true, and need to be taken into consideration by anyone wanting to understand Africa. I might

add that one reason why I write in this particular way is because the Editor, in calling for this particular article, specifically asked me for some " broad conclusions " which I might have arrived at following my recent tour, rather than " an account in diary form " of my travels. I ought also perhaps to say that earlier this year I was privileged to visit a number of countries in Equatorial Africa in the interests of the British and Foreign Bible Society, hence this article. One further preliminary word : by the term " Africa," I mean here "Equatorial Africa."

Proposition number one is this : *Africa is in the throes of a revolution.* The whole country is changing almost before our very eyes. I am aware, of course, that this statement has, in a sense, always been true, at least of Africans. From earliest times they have been noted as an adventurous people, always moving their homes, for example, to new and better sites, or to a better part of the country. Dr. Margaret Read has written of this characteristic feature of African tribal life :

> " One of the most common mistakes made is to assume that the migration of African peoples is a new phenomenon. As far as we can tell from tribal traditions, archaeological evidence, and early European observations, the movement of peoples in Africa has been a feature of its history from earliest times."

But Africans to-day are not only continuing to move from one place to another, though now at a very much accelerated pace (they are pouring into the areas where there are mines, plantations, and so on, so denuding the villages from which they come), but they are themselves being changed in the process in a way never known before. It is a revelation to go, for example, to Congo to-day, and to observe the new towns springing up almost overnight in that vast country, and to see the amazing building programmes : there are skyscrapers and factories and broad avenues in Leopoldville ; there are the most wonderful shops and offices and private dwelling houses in Elisabethville ; and in many another centre one can see, often alongside quite primitive huts, the new and the neat and the attractive little houses of the Africans—the évolués as they are called in Congo.

In countries where there has been contact with Europe for a longer period than in Congo, as for example the Gold Coast and Nigeria, this immense change coming over Africa is seen in yet more striking fashion. In both these last-named countries there are to-day Houses of Parliament (one might call them) where Africans sit with Europeans, and where they take an equal and an increasing share in the responsible task of governing their own countries. There is a widespread hunger for education almost everywhere in Africa, and Governments are doing everything in their power to satisfy this hunger. I was amazed to see the keenness of the Gold Coast people for schooling; bookshops in this country were crowded ; literacy campaigns are going on in a number of places.

Let it not be inferred from all this, however, that Africa is everywhere becoming more and more like Europe or America. There is still a good deal of the old Africa left ; and animism is neither dead nor dying. On the contrary, there is some evidence to show that it is increasing its hold in some areas. There are quite a number of new religions springing up too. But in many places to-day Africa is being completely transformed. The recent inauguration of the Comet Air Service to South Africa only serves to point all this.

The second proposition I would lay down is this : *this revolution which is going on does not necessarily help the Christian Church in its task of winning Africa for Christ.* Progress is only good—indeed in my view, is only progress—

insofar as it means going from the place where one is, to the place where one desires to be. There is such a thing as a Rake's Progress, as well as a Pilgrim's Progress. I did hear one very wise church leader say when I was in Africa, " The Church in this country is losing ground." I think it is with this particular danger in mind that missions in almost all the countries in Africa to-day are bending all their efforts to the task of education. It is essential that with all its getting, Africa should get Wisdom. Thinking along these lines, I was particularly struck with the keenness of the Church in Congo, which last year took as its motto the phrase, "Bring the children in." This year the emphasis in all mission schools is to be " Evangelism through education." The fact of the matter is, a battle is being fought in Africa to-day, every bit as real as the war going on in Korea or Malaya, though unfortunately many people as yet do not recognise it. It is a battle for the soul of Africa ; and one of the Church's best allies in this struggle is Christian education. It is nothing short of a tragedy that there are so few educational missionaries in these countries. It is yet more tragic that there are so few missionaries free to do specifically evangelistic work. If it is true, as has been maintained above, that the African is a born adventurer, it is also true that he is a deeply religious man ; he must have a religion. Those most qualified to judge assured me when I was there that there are many voices seeking to woo him to their particular creed. Granted, the Church is reporting quite extraordinary increases in membership in many parts of the continent; but are these increases big enough, and above all, are we bringing *all* the people in ?

Which leads me to my third and last proposition : *the time left in Africa is short.* Two things served particularly to bring this home to me when I was there. First, a fascinating book I picked up in Nairobi, written by an American, Negley Farson, and bearing the significant title, " Last Chance in Africa." This book, together with the daily paper I have been reading these last three or four weeks, have convinced me at any rate that things cannot possibly remain where they are now in Africa (as, of course, they cannot anywhere else). Sooner or later a solution must be found to the problems everywhere confronting us. Which way will Africa go ? The other incident which focused this thing for me was the Scripture reading, and the prayer following it, of a chairman at one of my meetings in Africa. It was not just the familiar words of Scripture " . . . . . now is salvation nearer than when you first believed"; it was the note of urgency I detected in everything this experienced missionary said or did. Those of my readers who are interested in music will know all about overtones. One strikes a single note, let us say, on the piano, and the sound given forth is enriched by a great number of additional tones. I caught, as I talked with missionaries on the field, this note of urgency in all they are doing: " . . . . . brethren the time is short."

One final word to relate all the foregoing to our common Bible Society work. In a revolutionary world (proposition one), a world uncertain of its direction (proposition two), and a world which must quickly come to important decisions (proposition three), there is only one book which speaks directly to the situation, the Bible. And our Book is being more and more sought after by black and white alike. Yet there is in Africa to-day a veritable " famine . . . . . of hearing the words of the Lord." More and yet more books are being asked for ; an enormous quantity over and above all this is *needed.* The B.F.B.S., which sent its first consignment of Scriptures to Africa in 1808, sent last year well over half-a-million copies to Equatorial Africa alone. It plans to send Scriptures in increasing numbers. But we must not rest until the Book is available in sufficient quantities, not only for all who ask for it, but for the tens of thousands more who need it.

THE AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY ON THE AIR

Francis C. Stifler

WHEN, about fifteen years ago, one of the great American Coast to Coast Radio networks discovered that the American Bible Society was not a teaching or interpreting organization but confined its work to aiding translators, publishing, distributing and encouraging the use of the Bible without note or comment and without purpose of profit, an invitation was extended to them to participate in a daily programme of interdenominational non-controversial broadcasts describing the ministries of the various agencies working in the fields of home and foreign missions, city missions, literacy and later in the various Christian services connected with the conduct of the war and its aftermath.

While no organization sponsoring these programmes was mentioned in connection with the broadcasts, the persons whose voices were heard each week on their special theme through the years have become widely recognized as specialists in their respective branches of Christian service.

Accordingly since July, 1938, the Secretary of Public Relations of the Society has broadcast over one or another of the nation-wide networks almost 600 scripts, ranging in length from four to twelve minutes, dealing exclusively with the processes of the Society in the fields of translation, publication, distribution and use of the Bible.

To meet the requirements of the networks that the scripts maintain a high standard of entertainment value, they have as often as possible been built around personalities or have featured the Bible's relationship to some current event or interest. The measure of success attained has been the number of requests for copies of the scripts always offered at the close of the programmes by the announcer. A tabulation of these requests has uniformily indicated through the years that the greatest interest is in, firstly, scripts dealing with successful ways of using the Bible and, secondly, the bearing of the Bible upon the history and progress of democracy. Not far behind comes the interest in the Society's service to the Blind and for the men and women in the Armed Services.

These programmes in which the Society has participated on the networks are sponsored by the National Council of Churches in whose Radio Department all requests for scripts are handled.

Among the interesting developments that have emerged from the Society's network broadcasts have been the publication of two books—one, entitled " Every Man's Book " published by Harper & Brothers and running through eight editions in eleven years. This book contained eighteen chapters expanded from as many scripts used early in the year 1941 when the war had broken in Europe but had not yet involved the United States. The publishers regarded it as remarkable that the war and its aftermath did not result in the outdating of the book for almost another decade. The other book, entitled " The Bible Speaks " after running through one edition of 20,000 copies was re-written and expanded under an altered title " The Bible Speaks to You " and remained in print for five years. In its final form it contains the gist of twenty-five scripts many of which are of a more personal nature such as " The Bible Speaks to Youth," " The Bible Speaks to Parents," " The Bible Speaks to Statesmen," etc.

Another development growing out of the networks programmes was an invitation repeated each year since 1946 to take four of the Sunday morning

spots on one of the oldest and most popular of the local programmes offered by New York's powerful station WOR. This Sunday morning programme called " Radio Chapel " has, over almost two decades, built up an enormous body of listeners whose letters in response to the Bible Society's programme in a recent year came from eight surrounding states and regularly surpass in number those that the network programmes elicit. On Radio Chapel the Society is mentioned as sponsoring the programme which presents a sixteen-minute script along with excellent music. This programme is regarded as one of the Society's best promotional media.

On Universal Bible Sunday in December each of the four major networks either invites the Society to provide the speaker for one of its regular religious programmes or assigns a special spot for the occasion. In recent years these programmes have been for the most part in the form of interviews or panel discussions.

The Society's World-wide Bible Reading period from Thanksgiving Day (the fourth Thursday of November) to Christmas has developed into the principal radio season of the Society's year. Script material is supplied to co-operating ministers in every city having one or more radio stations and to the radio chairmen of the large cities where there are Church Councils. Many of the popular commercial " shows," as the nature of their programme may admit, include interviews, report incidents or at least offer the reading lists which the Society distributes by the tens of millions at that season.

Last year through the National Council of Churches the Society produced five dramatized programmes around the five principal phases of its work, translation, publication, distribution, Bible reading and the work for the Blind which were heard during the World-wide Bible Reading season at a regular time each week over 260 different stations. It is expected that this will become a regular annual feature of the work. The programmes are developed by professionals under the direction of the Society's Radio Department and the Broadcasting and Films Commission of the National Council of Churches.

On the local station level, the Society provides four 30-second spot announcements of various incidents in its work each month which through the service of an advertising agency are supplied to its client stations and are offered, one each week, to a potential audience of more than 50,000,000 people.

The Society has supplied a script every week for almost 16 years to a station operated by one of the Lutheran bodies and supplies occasional material to other local stations.

In the New York City Metropolitan area the Society is well known for its " The Living Bible " programme at eight o'clock on Sunday morning. In the half hour allotted there are announcements about the Society's work, songs and Scripture reading, but the main feature of the programme is a Bible quiz in which some church in the area provides three contestants, more often Sunday school children than older people. The quizmaster is the gifted pastor of one of New York's Presbyterian churches whose genial personality and engaging radio presence lends to the programme a high degree of entertainment value which has resulted in a widespread desire of the churches to participate. In not a few of the churches, courses of study in Bible content and preliminary elimination contests are scheduled to produce the team of contestants—and on occasion the winners from different churches meet together on the air. A Bible is presented to the winner each Sunday and a small volume of favourite Scripture passages to the losing contestants. This quiz programme has enjoyed a growing popularity for more than ten years.

For the past three years the Society has been finding its way into television. Its films have been used occasionally and its officers have been invited to participate in the daily Chapel services scheduled by one of the New York City outlets. Once a year the Society is scheduled to appear on one of the great television networks whose programmes are seen either by cable or kinescope from coast to coast under the title " Lamp Unto My Feet "—a title notably appropriate for Bible programmes.

As to the future, it is evident that the day of speech-making on radio is passing. Greater and more insistent becomes the demand for interviews, discussions, dramatized presentations. The possiblities of television no one can as yet predict. One can only judge that the objectivity of the Bible in the general field of religion should augur well for its popularity on this new medium.

THE COMMISSION OF THE UNION OF EVANGELICAL BIBLE SOCIETIES IN GERMANY

ROBERT STEINER

IN Germany there is not just one, but very many—about thirty—Bible Societies. With the exception of the von Canstein Bible Society, they all have their origin in the time of the revival-movement at the beginning of the 19th century and sprang from the activity of the secretaries of the British and Foreign Bible Society. Unfortunately, no one has yet recounted the complete story of these early days of the Bible Societies in Germany and the debt they owe to the tireless efforts of the secretaries of the British Society.

Immediately after the first world war, the Bible Societies formed a so-called ' Committee of German Bible Societies ' which took responsibility in particular for the revision of the translation by Dr. Martin Luther. When the second world war came to an end, the Bible Societies found themselves confronted with the need for a more definite and binding union, and so the Committee was changed into the ' Union of Evangelical Bible Societies in Germany' (*Verband der Evangelischen Bibelgesellschaften in Deutchland*), which was legally registered as an association on 1st October, 1948. Each Bible Society remains independent within this Union, whose purpose is to take over tasks common to the Bible Societies in Germany. In the statutes of the Union, the essential sentence indicates that : " *the work of the Union is undertaken as a ministry of the Church.*" This forms the basis for all activity of the Union and its members.

The Nature of the Union

Without the Bible, nothing can happen in the Church. However, in Germany, as in all other countries, the production and distribution of the Scriptures have never become a concern of the churches as such and the leaders of the churches, who already bear heavy responsibility, have not taken action to interest their members in this essential task. This has been left to the Bible Societies or to private publishers or bookshops. Such an arrangement has worked out satisfactorily. But this is precisely the reason why the Bible Societies and the Union have always regarded their ministry as a task to which they consider they have been commissioned by the Lord of the Church.

The ministry of the Union is essentially *ecumenical.* In the abovementioned clause from the statutes of the Union, there is intentionally no mention of a particular church. What is meant is the Church of Jesus Christ,

as it has taken form here on earth. Naturally this form of the Church of Jesus Christ exists for us in the Evangelical Church in Germany, which embraces the large majority of the evangelical population, including the free churches in Germany. Furthermore, the ministry of our Bible Societies is not confined to Germany. A number of Scripture translations have been made by German missionaries, some of which have been printed and distributed by German Bible Societies, although this work is not nearly as extensive as that of the British and Foreign, the Scottish, the American and the Dutch Bible Societies.

Being a minsitry of the Church, means that the work of the Union and of its members is *non-profit making*. Of course, in this activity business means and methods have to be used, but this does not involve any enrichment of the Bible Societies or of those who work in them, and all available means are turned to the development of the cause and the task with which the Bible Societies have been entrusted.

The task of the Bible Societies and of the Union is a part of the *missionary* and *evangelistic* ministry of the Church, for it is founded upon the word of the Lord : " *Go ye therefore, and teach all nations* " (Matthew 28.19). Like all ministry of the Church, it is a ministry for the Lord of the Church and it is equally a ministry to man, both to the one who belongs to the Church of Jesus Christ, as well as to the one who is outside of the Church.

The Function of the Union

The first objective of the Union is to link up the Bible Societies in Germany in a *working fellowship*. The Bible Societies in Germany are very different from one another. Some of them publish and some only distribute, some are large and some very small ; some of them work this side and some of them the other side of the iron curtain. The concerns of the Bible Societies may differ widely, as may also their methods of working. It is therefore not easy to create a working fellowship out of this diversity.

Public Relations

The union has also to make the members of the evangelical churches familiar with the work of the Bible Societies, and to call them to *share in the responsibility* for it. Every ministry of the Church which is to endure must grow out of a living congregation under the preaching of the Word. It must be carried by the faith, the love and the prayers of the Church members who join in taking responsibility for it. But in Germany most Church members do not know that the production and distribution of the Bible concerns *them*. Many are aware of their responsibility for foreign and home missions, even if the number of these could be greater. But alas, it is not recognised in the Evangelical Church in Germany that the work of the Bible Societies must not lag behind other missionary work. We in Germany can learn much from the Bible Societies in the Netherlands, in Great Britain and in North America in making the cause of the Bible Societies the cause of congregation members.

In order to make the members of the churches familiar with the work of the Bible Societies, the Union has, with the help of the American Bible Society, been able to appoint a *travelling secretary* who visits the churches and has first to show by means of lectures, conversations and other methods, that this is a ministry which concerns every Church member.

The Union has also taken the first steps in the production of *publicity material* and has launched its own modest publication : " The Bible in the World," which is meant to serve not only the individual Bible Societies, but above all the churches and their members. From time to time, notices

about the distribution of the Bible appear in church publications and occasionally also in the daily papers, but our church members do not learn enough through these. And so it is the task of the Union to supply both the ecclesiastical and the daily press with information about the production and distribution of the Bible. We hope that the work of the Bible Societies will also one day be presented and made known to the churches by means of films. So far, however, all the requirements necessary for the making of such a ' Bible film ' are lacking.

As a result of the experience of the *Bible exhibition* opened for the Church Day in Berlin, which was visited by at least 120,000 people, many of whom were thereby made aware of the importance and meaning of the Word of God for the first time, the Union is also considering the organisation of other similar Bible exhibitions and putting material into the hands of the pastors which will help them to win the hearts of their church members for the ministry with the Bible, on the occasion of Bible Days, or of fellowship evenings and other meetings.

Contacts with the Churches and Religious Bodies.

But the Union of Bible Societies does not only turn to the individual churches, it also has to cultivate the *connection with the leading organs* of the Evangelical Church in Germany. The Union certainly carries out its work quite independently, but in this way it relieves the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany of all work connected with the distribution, the revision of the present text and new translations of the Holy Scriptures. If the approval of a revision or a new translation is required for the use of the Scriptures in church services, then this can only be given by the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany. And so it is advisable that a representative of the Council should take part in such work, so that the wishes of the Council can be taken into account at the right time.

Since there are now central offices for both *home* and *foreign missions*, the Union, as the central organ of the Bible Societies, will contact these offices in all matters concerning distribution of the Scriptures. On the home side, evangelistic work is only effective if it leads to and into the Bible. Such work remains unfruitful if those who are strangers to the Church and to the Word of God and have been reached by the spoken word, do not become men who know and love the Bible. It must be offered and presented to them in such a way that they are not offended by the appearance of the Bible. Equally necessary, is the connection of the Union with foreign missions. When some Bible Societies were founded, there was a desire to take up the distribution of the Holy Scriptures in mission areas, but that has so far been very limited. The German Bible Societies are now again being asked to help with the distribution of the Bible among the young churches. It is the concern of the Union to share in the raising of funds for the printing and sending out of such Bibles.

Among the tasks which the Union carries out on behalf of its members, is the furtherance of *fellowship with the United Bible Societies*. The latter gave great assistance to the Bible Societies in Germany after the war. Through the U.B.S. we received from sister societies in other countries both Bibles, and also such materials as are necessary for the production of Bibles. That fellowship has also been strengthened by the co-operation of the Union at general or regional conferences of the U.B.S. and by visits to Germany of U.B.S. and foreign Bible Society leaders.

Responsibility for the Text of the Bible

One of the most important responsibilities which the Union has undertaken is the completion of the *revision of Martin Luther's translation.*

Almost everywhere the translations of the Bible which were made during the time of the Reformation are now being subjected to revision. The Committee of the Bible Societies had already begun this revision in the twenties. Since then much has been done and much written about it. (For further reference, see BULLETIN 8, p. 30). In Germany the revision is particularly difficult because, on the one side there are those who would like to keep the text of Luther as far as possible as it is at present. On the other side, it is felt necessary to assimilate the text of Luther as nearly as possible to the language of to-day. A result which would satisfy all can hardly be achieved.

Should the acceptance of a revision of the Luther-text meet with too many difficulties, then the only way out would be to have a *new translation* besides that of Luther. The question might be asked and seriously considered, whether the Union could not do as has been done in Holland, and entrust this responsibility to a commission. This new translation would then need to be given official recognition through the Church authorities. But such an idea seems to be unacceptable to authoritative organs in the Evangelical Church in Germany right from the start. The fact is that there is a very strong demand in our Church for a new translation apart from the translation by Martin Luther, and this is shown by the large editions of the translation by Dr. Menge which has been circulated in more than 600,000 copies. Other translations of the New Testament have also had a very wide distribution. Since the war, the Zürich-translation has been much in demand and is at present being circulated in the East in a specially licensed edition by the Berlin Bible Society.

The Use of the Bible

This short introduction to the tasks of the Union shows how necessary *common* planning and carrying out of the work has become. In times of crisis, it will not be possible to avoid control over the distribution of the Bible. The more the Bible Societies in the Union can become used to joint work, the more easy will joint planning be. However, we must ask ourselves whether in fulfilling these tasks we have done everything which corresponds to the commission of the Union. Should we not be equally concerned and work to see that the Bible is also read? In Germany very many Bibles are given away. In almost every church the children receive a Bible or New Testament for confirmation, and bridal couples a wedding Bible when they are married. Only a very small percentage of these Bibles and New Testaments are read regularly. But it is only the regular reading of the Bible that makes for real possession. We must not conceal the fact that in this respect there is a great lack among our church members. Apart from a small remnant, our church-members are no longer Bible reading members. The Bible Societies and also the Union have not, however, felt it their responsibility to provide Bible helps and commentaries on books of the Bible. They will continue to leave this work to other organisations in our churches and to restrict themselves to offering the best presentation of the text.

What we have said here about the commission of the Union of Evangelical Bible Societies in Germany does not in any way exhaust the range of its tasks and services. But, whatever we may do, is in the end only directed to this one thing : " *That the word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified* " (II Thessalonians 3 : 1).